

**PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
TOWN OF NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

June 5, 2009

*Background notes for Monday, June 8th
Park and Recreation Commission Agenda*

NEEDHAM HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Needham High School will be graduating on Monday, June 8th. Weather permitting, they will return to Memorial Park for the ceremony. Assistant Director Karen Peirce and her family will be celebrating the graduation of her daughter Zoe, so Karen will not attend the Commission meeting. Congratulations to Zoe...and to Kristen Dermody, daughter of past Commissioner Bill Dermody.

CALENDARS

The Commission and Memorial Park Trustees had set a tentative date for the post spring use of athletic field lights for mid-June, but due to some conflicts, this joint public hearing will need to be held in July. Some new choices will be discussed at the meeting which I will then share with the Trustees to find an appropriate night.

ON-LINE REGISTRATION

The procurement process finally was completed during the week of May 18, and we had our new registration program installed on the 20th, went through training, and got the needed information installed in order to go live with on-line registration on May 22nd. Nicole and Karen put in extra time to insure the information was put into the system, and I did a lot of the double checking. We had two small glitches on the morning of the 22nd, but the company helped rectify them quickly. We were amazed to watch the screen to see how many people were making use of the on-line portion, ending the work day with almost \$90,000 collected. We won't be able to give a percentage of on-line vs. other registration options until the end of the summer, but it is likely in the 90% range. The amount of time saved by having people input their own information is incredible – it would have taken 5 summer staff plus Nicole about 4 weeks to process that much information!

EARLY BIRD POOL PASS SALES

From April 1 through May 22, we sold pool passes at the “early bird” rates to Needham residents. We can now report that we sold more “early bird” passes in 2009 than in 2008!

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
Family	166	216
Individual	41	53
Senior Citizen	23	37

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR SEARCH

The three semi-finalists each spent a day in Needham meeting with various groups, including parents, and then the candidates were narrowed down to two finalists. Last week, a team from Needham High School visited the work locations of the two finalists. Yesterday, the Superintendent announced that the new Athletic Director will be Micah Hauben. Micah and I have already corresponded and will have our first meeting when he starts in July and the new Principal has already discussed setting up an early July meeting with me, too. I truly look forward to working with him!!

MILLS FIELD TENNIS COURTS

DPW Engineering has been assisting me on the bid process for the renovation of the Mills Field tennis courts. The specifications include fence work and a crack repair at the Newman courts. The bid opening will be held in late June and it is hoped that the work can be scheduled over the summer. It will be easier to move our tennis lesson programs back to Mills during the school day, to avoid conflicts with school uses.

POOL PRE-SEASON

The approved drain cover is in place, so we are compliant with the new federal regulations from the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act. During pre-season cleaning, the foundation for the center dock was found to be seriously deteriorated, so a welder was hired to create a new foundation which is in place. The black railings throughout the complex have been repainted with a special paint. The DPW has been delayed in finishing the painting work due to weather, but will continue working quickly so that the dam can be closed and the lake and pool can begin to fill. Some of the pool staff started work this week so improvements will be seen as they move through their lengthy list. Some additional fence work will be done, with the replacement of the lower gate and the replacement of the structure surrounding the DE pit. Some repairs on the perimeter fence will be done to fix damage done by plows over the winter. Last spring, all the upper floor lighting fixtures were replaced with brighter more energy efficient models. This spring, the downstairs replacement work will be done.

FIELD NAMING UPDATE

The Board of Selectmen has voted to support the Sports Council requests to name some of the fields at DeFazio. The Park and Recreation Commission has previously voted to support the naming recommendations. The School Committee will have a discussion at their June 16th meeting and a vote at a following meeting.

SENIOR CENTER EXPLORATORY COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING

The Committee exploring sites for a Senior Center held another public hearing on Wednesday, June 3 and Phil Robey and I were able to attend. They haven't compiled all the survey information, so it was just an opportunity for people to express opinions. There was no consensus amongst those that attended, other than making sure that parking is taken care of at whichever site is eventually chosen.

FRIENDS OF NEEDHAM WOODS AND WATER

The clerk of the volunteer group Friends of Needham Woods and Water, Sam Bass Warner, has requested to come to an upcoming Commission meeting to discuss projects his group would like to work on over the next year. I'm waiting to hear if he's available on July 13 or July 27.

FALL FIELD SCHEDULING SUMMIT

Most summers, it isn't necessary to have a field scheduling summit for the fall programs, but a number of groups are starting to talk about making different requests, and some new groups are forming. As we'll still have some fields not ready due to construction, and we'll be working out other issues, I'm recommending that a scheduling summit be scheduled in July to get all the groups in the same room. At the same time, some of the issues from this spring can be discussed with them.

NEEDHAM BIKES

Needham resident Tad Staley has started a group that includes interested bicyclists, called Needham Bikes. Commissioner Chris Dollase is a member, and Vice Chair Brian Nadler has also met with Mr. Staley. The Town has a bike plan that has not moved forward on the capital funding list. I've worked on a variety of programs related to bicycles over the years, including regional mapping. This link will bring you to the Metropolitan Planning Council's bike mapping for Needham, plus some additional information.

<http://massbike.org/bikeways/facguide/mapcnmap.htm> I've put this topic on the agenda for discussion and Chris Dollase will give an update from the group's latest meeting.

APPOINTMENT

Former Council on Aging Director Ann Hartstein was appointed this week to serve as the Massachusetts Secretary for Elder Affairs! Ann did a remarkable job while in Needham and has been a support to Needham during her tenure with the State in other positions related to elder services. When I was promoted to Director, she was one of my mentors!

ANIMAL CONTROL

<http://www.needhamma.gov/index.aspx?NID=2270>

This link will bring you to the new Animal Control section on the Police Department's page on the Town's website. The new officer has put lots of great information on line, and even has a Lost and Found section. In less than 30 minutes from posting the information on a dog that had been found, the owner saw the posting and contacted the Police Department!
